



ALBANIA *yours to discover*

PRESS RELEASE

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Summer Tourism to Albania Increased by 35%, More European Visitors

- As of September 2007, the total number of visitors to Albania **reached 1.6 million¹**, an increase of 35 percent compared to the same time period last year.
- By far the majority of tourists (92%) were from European countries, with the largest numbers coming from countries and areas in the region, **Kosova 32%, Macedonia 24%, Montenegro 10%**, Italy 9%, Serbia 7%, and Greece 6%. **Six percent of travelers came from the United Kingdom.**
- Tourism figures are increasing year round, with the largest increases in January (31%), March (30%) and June (27%).
- 2006 figures show that there has been an increase in both the **number of accomodating units** (from 600 to 908) and the number of touristic agencies (from 60 to 110) since 2004.
- According to *World Travel & Tourism Council*, tourism contributed 3.8% to Albania's GDP (2006), and estimates that in the next five years tourism will grow to contribute nearly **7.5% of the country's GDP.**
- **Gross income from tourism:**

2004	592 million Euros
2005	692 million Euros
2006	805 million Euros
2007 (January-October)	Around 1 billion Euros

Ten-Fold Budget Increases for Tourism Development, Private Firms Investing in Tourism

The Government of Albania has **budgeted for a ten-fold increase** (from €100,000 in 2006 to €1 million) for tourism development. The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports (MTCYS) will use funds to invest in tourism promotion, nationwide signage, and tourism information centers.

- For the 2005-2007 period, MTCYS has invested **€4.2 million** in promoting and protecting Albania's cultural heritage, a special fund of **€1.23 million** will go for the **restoration and reconstruction of religious cult objects.**
- For 2007, the Government of Albania spent **€15 million** on the reconstruction of another important road segment on Albania's southern coast. **Road construction** is expected to be completed within the next two years.
- **A private Albanian company invested €6.5 million** to build a **cable lift** to improve tourism to the Dajti National Park, in the mountains overlooking Albania's capital city of Tirana.

¹ This figure includes non-resident immigrants, according to guidelines of WTO.



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Foreign Investments Supporting Infrastructure Projects and Competitiveness of Private Businesses

- The World Bank's \$13.6 million **Sustainable Development of Tourism along the Southern Coast of Albania** will develop and preserve of coastal villages.
- The **EU's CARDS program** to support large infrastructure development programs and loans and grants from the **Dutch government**, have reached a total of **€29 million**.
- **USAID's Enterprise Development and Export Market Services** program assists the MTCYS for tourism promotion and businesses improve the quality of products and services for tourists.
- The **new international airport terminal** was inaugurated in April 2007. 452,990 passengers traveled through the airport, an increase of 22% compared to the same period in 2006.

Putting Albania on the International Tourism Map

- **CNN will broadcast a tourism commercial** on Albania starting in early March 2008
- MTCYS is investing in **TV commercials for the domestic audience**.
- As established by law, all tourism destinations must have a **Tourism Service Office** for visitors and local touristic operators.
- In cooperation with several foreign embassies in Albania and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the MTCYS will establish **Centers of Albanian Culture and Tourism** in several European countries.
- The **official tourism web page** www.albaniantourism.com is continuously updated with information on cultural, historic, and adventure tourism destinations.
- Several Albanian hotels are now offering **"on-line booking"**

Come Discover Albania!

- **Albania's Rich Cultural Heritage:** Restoration of cultural monuments, cult objects and the redesign of archeological parks has considerably increased the number of foreign visitors in archeological and museums sites of the country.
- **The Project of 40 Inns:** Apart from the tourism of sun and sand, Albania offers a unique experience in rural parts of the country. This program will highlight Albania's special architectural style of houses that will be able to provide accomodation for tourists seeking a truly authentic Albanian experience.
- **Top 10 Tourism Destinations in Albania**, which will take visitors around the most beautiful sites of the country, from the Albanian Alps, to the national and archeological parks, cities part of the World Heritage of UNESCO in Butrint and Gjirokaster, as well as the astonishing Adriatic and Ionian coast.
- **Journey into Antiquity** by visiting the many antique and medieval cities and throughfares so important to European history.
- **Traces of Venetian Culture** Along the Albanian coast, from the city of Durrës's Venetian Torre, to the fortresses of Shkodra and Butrint, this program will trace the economic and political influences that can still be found today.

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